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ABSTRACT

The Boy Scout World Bureau pamphlet is designed to assist Scouters who are interested in bringing Scouting to the handicapped boy. Procedures for introducing the handicapped to Scouting are outlined; and topics such as outdoor camping, activities, badges and uniform, service, and general principles are covered. (CD)

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These our Brothers

A Guide to Scouting with the Handicapped

These Our Brothers
Scouting
with the Handicapped Boy

Based on notes prepared by Vivien Beavis, member of the World Extension Scouting Sub-Committee (New Zealand) whose experience, knowledge and help are gratefully acknowledged.

The World Bureau is most anxious that Scouting be brought to all boys and particularly to the boy who has a handicap whether it be physical, social or mental. This pamphlet has been prepared for the help and guidance of those Scouters who might be hesitant to take up this work of Scouting with the Handicapped. It must always be remembered that boys with handicaps are boys with all the instincts, desires and emotions natural to the normal boy and should be treated as such in so far as it is possible. With imagination the normal Scout programme can be adapted to the boy with a handicap, whether the boy be blind, deaf, has some physical disability or be below the average intelligence.

"Be prepared for all sorts of weather!" (Switzerland).

The main objective of this pamphlet is to outline the procedures that should be followed to introduce a boy, if the handicap be not too great, to the game of Scouting.
Where boys, of necessity must be in hospitals, institutions, colonies etc. it has been found that the Scouting programme is a great help in the training and rehabilitation of these boys.

Policy :

In line with modern medical and educational policy the whole aim and object of Scouting with the Handicapped is to keep everything as near to normal as possible. Try whenever possible, to place handicapped boys in normal Packs and Troops. There is no doubt whatever that Scouting, properly presented, can be one of the most valuable aids to a boy's physical and mental rehabilitation. A handicapped boy, only too conscious of being "different", finds that in Scouting he can be the same as other boys, wearing the same uniform, taking the same promise, and expected to render, as far as possible, the same service.

Blind Scouts preparing for a competition (Great Britain).

How to find the boy:

Ask any of the following for the names and addresses of handicapped boys:

1. Doctors, nurses, Public Health officers etc.
2. Headmasters and staff members and teachers of schools.
3. Staff members of Hospital Schools, Spastic (Cerebral Palsy) Schools etc.
4. Leaders of all religions.
5. Any institution for handicapped persons (Epileptic Colonies—Orphanages—Homes for the Blind).
6. Welfare workers.
7. Organisations for refugees, displaced persons etc.

What to do first:

When names and addresses have been procured, make a direct approach to obtain medical assessment of disabilities, and assistance with major problems (such as the transport of Handicapped Cubs and Scouts if this should prove to be necessary). Chat with parents and attending doctor if there is one.

What to do with the boy when you have found him:

1. **Medical Assessment.** — Obtain from the boy's parents and teachers, and from any other available source, all the information you can about his disability, and even more important, his capabilities.

2. **Inclusion in normal Pack or Troop.** — Endeavour at all costs to get the boy into a normal Pack or Troop if his mental and medical condition will allow. Start with one boy until the Scouters get used to him. Do not put more than two handicapped boys to a Cub Six or Scout Patrol.

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3. **Six or Patrol of handicapped boys within a normal Pack or Troop.** — If there are sufficient suitable boys to warrant it, try to institute a special Six or Patrol in the normal Pack or Troop. These boys may need an extra hour or two a week to help them keep up. This works successfully in a well disciplined Pack or Troop which has very good, resourceful Scouters.

4. **Packs and Troops for Handicapped Boys.** — (1) Large numbers of severely handicapped of backward boys who are obviously quite unable to attend and benefit from a normal Group, (2) Boys in hospitals and other institutions. Form these into special Packs and Troops. Except where blind or deaf boys are concerned, no special training is required to run a Pack or Troop of physically handicapped boys. If you have deaf or blind boys, advice will be needed from parents, teachers, nurses and doctors until the Scouters can cope. If possible use the nurses, doctors, teachers etc. as warranted Scouters.

5. **The Home-Bound Boy.** — When the boy is too ill or too badly crippled to leave his home he should if possible be made a member of a local Pack or Troop and have his Scouting taken to him by visiting Scouters, Senior Scouts, Rovers, his own Patrol Leader and so on. He should wear the uniform of this Pack or Troop.

"Patience" — Paraplegic Scout building a model (Netherlands).

Use of alternative tests:

If the normal test is quite beyond the scope of a boy, a corresponding alternative test should be substituted. It may be necessary to adapt the alternative test itself to suit a particular boy. Do not ever make a test too easy. These boys, just as any boy, expect to extend themselves fully within the limits of their disabilities. Every test and every activity must present a challenge to the individual boy, according to his degree of handicap. His sense of achievement depends on this.

Hints on enrolling handicapped boys in normal Packs or Troops:

Before the boy joins, the Scouter should explain to the Pack or Troop something of the boy's degree of disability; he should tell them to treat him exactly as one of themselves; to show no curiosity or pity; **not** to do everything for him but to jump to the boy's assistance when he genuinely needs help; and not to encroach on any particular job given to him as his own regular responsibility but to be careful to see he does not overdo things.
Treat the subject with complete matter-of-factness, avoiding all sentiment and unnecessary publicity. In practically all cases the boys will take the handicapped fellow completely for granted. It's the adults who look for trouble and are apt to magnify the significance of the whole occasion ! Impress on your Scouters :

1. The aim is to help the handicapped Scout/Cub achieve independence.

2. The importance of including the boy in **every** activity by some means or other even if it means inventing a way.

3. The fact that the boy too has something to contribute. Very often, in sheer determination and perseverance he puts us to shame.

4. The great importance of seeing that the boy has an opportunity to pass tests as often as possible. This is just as vital to him as to the normal boy—probably more so.

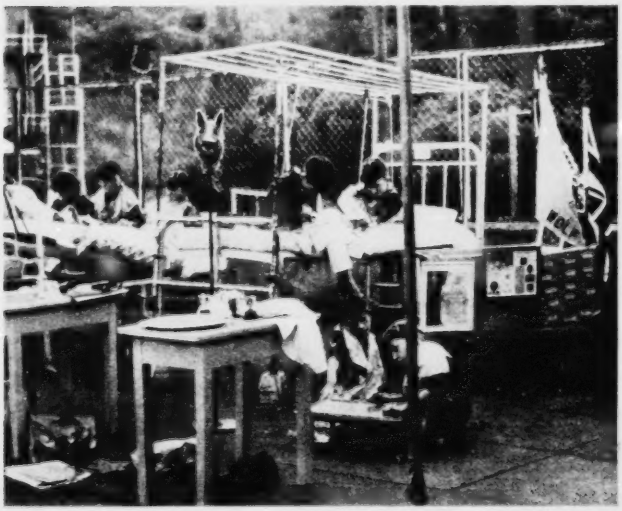
5. The great aim of " normality ", the just being " one of us ". Avoid publicity or " parading " the boy.

6. The necessity of his getting to know the boy beforehand in order to decide just what is advisable to say to the Group.

7. The necessity for commonsense judgments. For example: If the boy fails some movement ask yourself, 'Is he unable to do this because of the degree of disability, or is he unable to do this because he has always had it done for him ?'

8. The necessity for close contact with parents and medical authorities.

The Scouters and Patrol Leaders (or Sixers, if he is to be a Cub) should visit the boy and get to know him beforehand. Then, when he attends his first meeting, he finds familiar, friendly faces. Introduce him to the Troop briefly and in a matter-of-fact way. Allowing no time for embarrassment, plunge the whole Troop or Pack into a well planned activity which immediately includes and involves the new



"Pack Meeting, Ward 10" — A hospital group (New Zealand).

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Recruit. Remember, it may take much greater courage for the boy to face the Troop than for the Troop to face the boy.

Badges and Uniform:

Ordinary stars and badges should be used. There should be no provision for special badges of any kind. These would only make the handicapped boy continue to feel "different" from the non-handicapped boy. Each boy should wear the normal uniform of his country and his particular group. If there is no money to buy uniforms get on with Scouting activities until there is some!

Naming of Packs, Sixes, Troops and Patrols:

Make absolutely no reference to "handicap" in the name you choose. For example, "1st Brockley Hill, Stanmore" in North London, is actually the Hospital Group in Stanmore Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital.

Length of Service:

Service should be reckoned as from one month from joining date. This ruling is intended to prevent penalising the boy who is very slow and backward, either because he is intellectually handicapped or because he has had little or no education.

Making use of non-handicapped Scouts and Rovers:

Make full use of the older boys and Rovers (if any), as Instructors at Pack and Troop Meetings, in Hospitals, Special Schools, on Cub Outings and at camps. The Rovers can undertake all kinds of fine Service Projects. Information is available on ways in which use may be made of older boys.

Finding Scouters and other adult helpers:

Try to recruit Scouters from among staff members of hospitals, institutions, school teachers, nurses, welfare workers, International Red Cross, youth workers, and various religious groups. Many of the people you ask will be much too busy to take out a warrant but they may become willing voluntary helpers, either assisting the Scouters when possible, or as members of Committees helping to run Packs and Troops. Members of the medical profession, welfare workers or teachers of special schools may become " advisors " on handicapped boys. Skilled advice is needed at all levels but especially with Pack and Troop operations. It is the Cubmasters and Scoutmasters who will need guidance in how to approach and train handicapped boys. The Scouters may be trained to have a good practical knowledge of Scouting skills and activities but may be, initially, at a loss how to apply this knowledge when dealing with blind or deaf boys, those confined to beds and wheelchairs or boys who are " slow learners ". Good practical guidance is needed at the level of the community in which the boy lives. (The " community " may be bounded by four walls, or it may be the larger one of village or city.) If there are any members of Volunteer Service from abroad available invite them to help while they are in your country. Many of them have been Scouts.

Programmes and Activities:

(a) Some of these boys may take a long time to pass tests. There are various reasons for this. The boy may be intellectually or mentally handicapped. He may be of normal intelligence but have very great difficulties of communication (speech or hearing), or of movement (walking or hand control). Or, because of illness or disability, the boy may have had little or no education. It is very important to keep the Pack or Troop programme varied and exciting. It does not need to be elaborate. The simplest thing, remember, is likely to open a door on a whole new field for some of these boys (for example, taking a boy outside under a clear night sky to view the stars for the first time in his life).

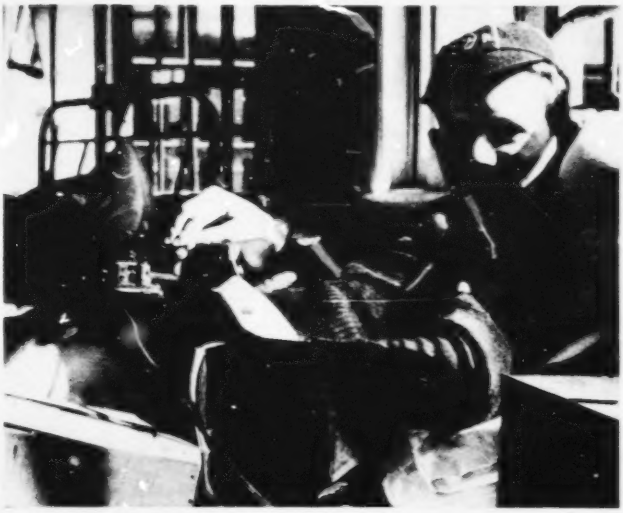
(b) Remember too, that these boys may tire very easily. In planning your programmes allow for the fact that everything you do will take at least twice as long as when working with normal boys.

(c) When working with intellectually handicapped boys, keep the emphasis on activity—on *doing*, not on trying to learn things.

(d) With younger boys, who take a discouragingly long time to gain each badge or star it is important to have large progress charts on which every single thing they achieve is visually recorded. If, for example, a Cub finally passes his reef knot, let him put his finger-print on a chart, or place a feather in a head-dress of some kind. Even if you have no equipment and can only chalk up his progress on a rock, celebrate each hard-won achievement in some way. Various suggestions for Cub and Scout progress records are: Mountains and climbers; figures on a jungle trail; rocks in a stream; pegs on a peg board; feathers in a head-dress; ribbons or reeds on a pole; finger-prints etc.

(e) Never omit any of the Cub or Scout ceremonials—Grand Howl, Flag drill, inspection etc. Always be sure that leaders and boys wear their uniforms (after you can afford to buy uniforms, of course !).

"Smells good !" — Handicapped Scout cooking at camp (Netherlands).



" Sick yes but I can reach the world ! "
Handicapped Cub taking part in annual Jamboree-On-The-Air (New Zealand).

(f) The words " know how to " are important. Even if a boy is so handicapped that he cannot handle an axe, build a shelter or erect a tent, he should know all about these things, and what to do with them. You can then use his knowledge in training recruits or younger boys thus giving the severely handicapped boy a very real sense of responsibility and achievement.

(g) Use the " patrol or six system " if you possibly can. This is important. Be normal !

Camping and the out-of-doors:

Let us make sure that all handicapped Cubs and Scouts will go camping and are out of doors as much as possible. Alternatively, normal out-of-door Scout activities should be taken indoors to the

boys in such ways as nature study, miniature pioneering, model fire-lighting, building model camps or Pack Dens, and the use of as much natural material as possible. All these things can be excitingly and successfully carried out in hospital wards.

Scouter Training:

All Scouters working with handicapped boys need normal, basic Wood Badge training! The work we do with handicapped boys is simply an adaption of normal Scouting activities to fit the capabilities and environment of each boy.

Non-handicapped Scouts and Scouters:

A big part of our task is to train the Scout Movement as a whole to accept and integrate the handicapped boy. From the point of view of the boy this is of paramount importance because the main aim in his rehabilitation is to teach him to take his place in the community to the greatest possible degree. This means that the community, equally, must accept him, and adapt itself to him.

Service and the Good Turn:

This cannot be emphasized too much. We must train these boys, within the limits of their mental and physical abilities, to the highest possible degree of service and independence. This training commences, very simply, with the Good Turn—something these boys may do for others. Cubbing and Scouting offers an opportunity which these boys have previously been denied.

Start with simplest little things and progress to such projects as tidying and beautifying hospital buildings and grounds, or the local village. Thus we can help the handicapped boy to render, as far as he is able, the same service as his Brother Scouts in the community.

National Organisation:

The best method of approach to the whole problem is to fit Scouting with the Handicapped boy into the already existing framework of the Scout organization. This has many advantages:

1. It is much more economical in:
   (a) Expenditure of money.
   (b) The numbers of warranted Commissioners and Scouters necessary.

2. It leads more directly to the acceptance of the handicapped boy, and his integration into the Movement.

3. It aims at placing the direct responsibility for Handicapped Cubs and Scouts where it should ultimately rest—
   (a) With the *national* Commissioner in charge of each main section (Cub, Scout, Senior Scout, Rover).

"There's always time for a game!" Cubs with Polio having fun (Belgium).

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(b) With Area or District Commissioners (or their equivalent in the respective country), the men and women who organize practical Scouting throughout the country under the guidance of the National Commissioners. The Fi'd Commissioners share in this responsibility too.

General Principles:

1. A Headquarters Commissioner concerned with this task, preferably with an Advisory Committee, is essential.

2. Provide at every level of organization (National, Area or Region, District, Troop and Pack) the expert medical and educational advice that is constantly necessary. This advice will be connected with such things as:

   (a) Where to find boys. How to assess their disabilities. How to approach institutions, and medical and educational authorities.

   (b) How to understand various types of disabilities.

   (c) How to deal with any special situations, such as epileptic seizures.

   (d) The difficult problems involved in training large numbers of boys confined to beds and wheelchairs.

   (e) The problems involved in trying to integrate a handicapped boy into the normal Scouting activities of a "normal" Pack or Troop.

   (f) How and where to find help with money, transport, uniform, equipment.

   (g) The general organization of "Handicapped" Packs and Troops.

   (h) How to learn, and use in training the boys, any special teaching methods which may be needed by blind or deaf boys.

3. Make the fullest possible use of non-uniformed or "lay" helpers. This helps to solve the difficult problem of finding new Scouters.

Stamps for our "U" Stamp Bank from all over the world (Canada).

Golden Rules:

Keep your organization and your Scouting **as near to normal as possible.** This is the key to success !

Avoid over-use of the word " handicapped " or similar words. NEVER use these words in front of the boys. They know they are handicapped without being told.

Avoid a lot of publicity.

Keep your sense of humour. You will need it !

Remember that Baden-Powell said, " If it isn't fun it isn't Scouting ".

Avoid pity and sentimentality. It is difficult to feel pity for those who refuse to feel pity for themselves.

Provide your boys with as many normal Scout contacts as possible. If they cannot get out—then take the Brotherhood of Scouting to them.

Concentrate on the boy and the things he CAN do—not on his handicap.

For the Unit Leader—use imagination, be of good courage and remember that thousands of Scouters in many lands have found, to their great reward, that they can serve These Our Brothers !

Good Scouting !

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World Extension Scouting Sub-Comittee:

The disabilities that may prevent a boy from taking part in the normal activities of a Scout Troop are many and varied. The boy may be deaf, blind, crippled, epileptic, spastic, paraplegic, convalescent from tuberculosis or polio, or confined to a hospital or institution. As no one man can give advice on all these afflictions, the World Committee has set up the World Extension Scouting Sub-Committee. The members of this Sub-Committee are all specialists on one or more of these handicaps, on child training and on Scouting; it is to these men and women that we can apply for help and guidance.

Persons seeking advice on Scouting with the Handicapped should address their letters to the Secretary of the Sub-Committee, c/o The Boy Scouts World Bureau in Geneva, Switzerland.

The Scout "U" Stamp Bank:

The Scout "U" Stamp Bank enables members of the Scout Movement of all ages, everywhere, to help less fortunate Brother Scouts.

The Stamp Bank is an extension of the Scout Universal Fund (Scout "U" Fund) which covers all Scout self-help projects—handicapped Scouting, needed training and camping equipment, needed facilities, literature, training scholarships, disaster relief, etc.

Members collect used postage stamps, especially commemoratives, pictorials and high values. Soaked off the paper in plenty of clear water and rinsed, the stamps are packed in a tough envelope or box and mailed at the cheapest postage rates to the Stamp Bank where they are pooled, sorted and sold to raise the needed funds. This fine service to world brotherhood is largely carried out by members of the International Fellowship of Former Scouts and Guides.

Send collected, used stamps to either:

Scout "U" Stamp Bank, Box 104,
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